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(Sup.) *Tues., March 11.*

For several weeks I have not been quite well. I sleep badly, and have the most harassing dreams from night to morning, in which I see myself in the most various states, carry on all sorts of conversation with known and unknown persons, get into disputes and quarrels, and all this in such a vivid manner, that I am perfectly conscious of every particular next morning. But this dreamy life consumes the powers of my brain, so that I feel weak and unnerved in the day-time, and without thought or pleasure for any intellectual activity.

I had frequently complained of my condition to Goethe, and he had repeatedly urged me to consult my physician. "Your malady," said he, "is certainly not very serious; it is probably nothing but a little stagnation, which a glass or two of mineral water or a little salts would remove. But do not let it linger any longer; attack it at once."

Goethe may have been right, and I said to myself that he was right; but my indecision and disinclination operated in this case, so that I again allowed many restless nights and wretched days to pass, without making the least effort to remove the indisposition.

As I did not appear to Goethe very gay and cheerful to-day after dinner, he lost his patience, and could not refrain from smiling at me ironically, and bantering me a little.

"You are a second Shandy," said he, "the father of that renowned Tristram, who was annoyed half of his life by a creaking door, and who could not come to the resolution of removing the daily annoyance with a few drops of oil.

"But so it is with us all! The darkness and enlightenment of man make his destiny. The demon ought to lead us every day in leading strings, and tell us and direct us what we ought to do on every occasion. But the good spirit leaves us in the lurch, and we grope about in the dark.

"Napoleon was the man! Always enlightened, always clear and decided, and endowed at every hour with sufficient energy to carry into effect whatever he considered advantageous and necessary. His life was the stride of a demi-god, from battle to battle, and from victory to victory. It might well be said of him, that he was found in a state of continual enlightenment. On this account, his destiny was more brilliant than any the world had seen before him, or perhaps will ever see after him.

"Yes, yes, my good friend, that was a fellow whom we cannot imitate."

Goethe paced up and down the room. I had placed myself at the table, which had been already cleared, but upon which there was left some wine with some biscuits and fruit. Goethe filled for me, and compelled me to partake of both. "You have, indeed," said he, "not condescended to be our guest at dinner to-day, but still a glass of this present from good friends ought to do you good."

I did not refuse these good things, and Goethe continued to walk up and down the room, murmuring to himself in an excited state of mind, and from time to time uttering unintelligible words.

What he had just said about Napoleon was in my mind, and I endeavoured to lead the conversation back to that subject. "Still it appears to me," I began, "that Napoleon was especially in that state of continued enlightenment when he was young, and his powers were yet on the increase,—when, indeed, we see at his side divine protection and a constant fortune. In later years, on the contrary, this enlightenment appears to have forsaken him, as well as his fortune and his good star."

"What would you have?" returned Goethe. "I did not write my 'love songs,' or my 'Werther,' a second time. That divine enlightenment, whence everything proceeds, we shall always find in connection with youth and productiveness, as in the case of Napoleon, who was one of the most productive men that ever lived.

"Yes, yes, my good friend, one need not write poems and plays to be productive; there is also a productiveness of deeds, which in many cases stands an important degree higher. The physician himself must be productive, if he really intends to heal; if he is not so, he will only succeed now and then, as if by chance; but, on the whole, he will be only a bungler."

"You appear," added I, "in this case, to call productiveness that which is usually called genius."

"One lies very near the other," returned Goethe. "For what is genius but that productive power by which deeds arise that can display themselves before God and nature, and are therefore permanent, and produce results. All Mozart's works are of this kind; there lies in them a productive power which operates upon generation after generation, and still is not wasted or consumed.

"It is the same with other great composers and artists. What an influence have Phidias and Raphael had upon succeeding centuries, and Dürer and Holbein also. He who first invented the forms and proportions of the old German architecture, so that in the course of time a Strasburg minster and cathedral of Cologne were possible, was also a genius; for his thoughts have a power continually productive, and operate even to the present hour. Luther was a genius of a very important kind; he has already gone on with influence for many a long day, and we cannot count the days when he will cease to be productive in future ages. Lessing would not allow himself the lofty title of a genius; but his permanent influence bears witness against him. On the other hand, we have, in literature, other names, and those of importance, the possessors of which, whilst they lived, were deemed great geniuses, but whose influence ended with their life, and who

were therefore less than they and others thought. For, as I said before, there is no genius without a productive power of permanent influence; and furthermore, genius does not depend upon the business, the art, or the trade which one follows, but may be alike in all. Whether one shows oneself a man of genius in science, like Oken and Humboldt, or in war and statesmanship, like Frederick, Peter the Great, and Napoleon, or whether one composes a song like Béranger, it all comes to the same thing; the only point is, whether the thought, the discovery, the deed, is living, and can live on.

“Then I must add, it is not the mass of creations and deeds which proceed from a person, that indicates the productive man. We have, in literature, poets who are considered very productive, because volume after volume of their poems has appeared. But, in my opinion, these people ought to be called thoroughly unproductive; for what they have written is without life and durability. Goldsmith, on the contrary, has written so few poems that their number is not worth mentioning; but, nevertheless, I must pronounce him to be a thoroughly productive poet, and, indeed, even on that account, because the little that he has written has an inherent life which can sustain itself.”

A pause ensued, during which Goethe continued to pace up and down the room. In the mean time, I was desirous of hearing something more on this weighty point, and therefore endeavoured to arouse Goethe once more.

“Does this productiveness of genius,” said I, “lie merely in the mind of an important man, or does it also lie in the body?”

“The body has, at least,” said Goethe, “the greatest influence upon it. There was indeed a time when, in Germany, a genius was always thought of as short, weak, or hunch-backed; but commend me to a genius who has a well-proportioned body.

“When it was said of Napoleon that he was a man of granite, this applied particularly to his body. What was it, then, which he could not and did not venture? From the burning sands of the Syrian deserts, to the snowy plains of Moscow, what an incalculable amount of marches, battles, and nightly bivouacs did he go through? And what fatigues and bodily privations was he forced to endure? Little sleep, little nourishment, and yet always in the highest mental activity. After the awful exertion and excitement of the eighteenth Brumaire, it was midnight, and he had not tasted anything during the whole day, and yet, without thinking of strengthening his body, he felt power enough in the depth of the night to draw up the well-known proclamation to the French people. When one considers what he accomplished and endured, one might imagine that when he was in his fortieth year not a sound particle was left in him; but even at that age he still occupied the position of a perfect hero.

“But you are quite right: the real focus of his lustre belongs to his youth. And it is

something to say that one of obscure origin, and at a time which set all capacities in motion, so distinguished himself as to become, in his seven-and-twentieth year, the idol of a nation of thirty millions! Yes, yes, my good friend, one must be young to do great things. And Napoleon is not the only one!"

"His brother Lucien," remarked I, "also did a great deal at an early age. We see him as president of the five hundred, and afterwards as minister of the interior, when he had scarcely completed his five-and-twentieth year."

"Why name Lucien?" interposed Goethe. "History presents to us hundreds of clever people, who, whilst still young, have, both in the cabinet and in the field, superintended the most important matters with great renown."

"If I were a prince," continued he, with animation, "I would never place in the highest offices people who have gradually risen by mere birth and seniority, and who in their old age move on leisurely in their accustomed track, for in this way but little talent is brought to light. I would have young men; but they must have capacities, and be endowed with clearness and energy, and also with the best will and the noblest character. Then there would be pleasure in governing and improving one's people. But where is there a prince who would like this, and who would be so well served?"

"I have great hopes of the present Crown Prince of Prussia. From all that I hear and know of him, he is a very distinguished man; and this is essential to recognize and choose qualified and clever people. For, say what we will, like can only be recognized by like; and only a prince who himself possesses great abilities can properly acknowledge and value great abilities in his subjects and servants. 'Let the path be open to talent' was the well-known maxim of Napoleon, who really had a particular tact in the choice of his people, who knew how to place every important power where it appeared in its proper sphere, and who, therefore, during his lifetime, was served in all his great undertakings as scarcely any one was served before him."

Goethe delighted me particularly this evening. The noblest part of his nature appeared alive in him, while the sound of his voice and the fire of his eyes were of such power, as if he were inspired by a fresh gleam of the best days of youth.

It was remarkable to me that he, who at so great an age himself superintended an important post, should speak so decidedly in favour of youth, and should desire the first offices in the state to be filled, if not by youths, at least by men still young. I could not forbear mentioning some Germans of high standing, who at an advanced age did not appear to want the necessary energy and youthful activity for the direction of the most important and most various affairs.

"Such men are natural geniuses," returned Goethe, "whose case is peculiar; they

experience a renewed puberty, whilst other people are young but once.

“Every *Entelechia*<sup>[1]</sup> is a piece of eternity, and the few years during which it is bound to the earthly body does not make it old. If this *Entelechia* is of a trivial kind, it will exercise but little sway during its bodily confinement; on the contrary, the body will predominate, and when this grows old the *Entelechia* will not hold and restrain it. But if the *Entelechia* is of a powerful kind, as is the case with all men of natural genius, then with its animating penetration of the body it will not only act with strengthening and ennobling power upon the organization, but it will also endeavour with its spiritual superiority to confer the privilege of perpetual youth. Thence it comes that in men of superior endowments, even during their old age, we constantly perceive fresh epochs of singular productiveness; they seem constantly to grow young again for a time, and that is what I call a repeated puberty. Still youth is youth, and however powerful an *Entelechia* may prove, it will never become quite master of the corporeal, and it makes a wonderful difference whether it finds in the body an ally or an adversary.

“There was a time in my life when I had to furnish a printed sheet every day, and I accomplished it with facility. I wrote my ‘Geschwister’ (Brother and Sister) in three days; my ‘Clavigo,’ as you know, in a week. Now it seems I can do nothing of the kind, and still I can by no means complain of want of productiveness even at my advanced age. But whereas in my youth I succeeded daily and under all circumstances, I now succeed only periodically and under certain favourable conditions. When ten or twelve years ago, in the happy time after the war of independence, the poems of the ‘Divan’ had me in their power, I was often productive enough to compose two or three in a day, and it was all the same to me whether I was in the open air, in the chariot, or in an inn. Now, I can only work at the second part of my ‘Faust’ during the early part of the day, when I feel refreshed and revived by sleep, and have not been perplexed by the trifles of daily life. And, after all, what is it I achieve? Under the most favourable circumstances, a page of writing, but generally only so much as one could write in the space of a hand-breadth, and often, when in an unproductive humour, still less.”

“Are there, then, no means,” said I, “to call forth a productive mood, or, if it is not powerful enough, of increasing it?”

“That is a curious point,” said Goethe, “and a great deal might be thought and talked about it.

“No productiveness of the highest kind, no remarkable discovery, no great thought which bears fruit and has results, is in the power of any one; but such things are elevated above all earthly control. Man must consider them as an unexpected gift from above, as pure children of God, which he must receive and venerate with joyful thanks. They are

akin to the demon, which does with him what it pleases, and to which he unconsciously resigns himself, whilst he believes he is acting from his own impulse. In such cases, man may often be considered as an instrument in a higher government of the world,—as a vessel found worthy for the reception of a divine influence. I say this, whilst I consider how often a single thought has given a different form to whole centuries, and how individual men have, by their expressions, imprinted a stamp upon their age, which has remained uneffaced, and has operated beneficially upon succeeding generations.

“There is, however, a productiveness of another kind subjected to earthly influences, and which man has more in his power, although he here also finds cause to bow before something divine. Under this category I place all that appertains to the execution of a plan, all the links of a chain of thought, the ends of which already shine forth; I also place there all that constitutes the visible body of a work of art.

“Thus, Shakspeare was inspired with the first thought of his Hamlet, when the spirit of the whole presented itself to his mind as an unexpected impression, and he surveyed the several situations, characters, and conclusion, in an elevated mood, as a pure gift from above, on which he had no immediate influence, although the possibility of conceiving such a thought certainly presupposed a mind such as his. But the individual scenes, and the dialogue of the characters, he had completely in his power, so that he might produce them daily and hourly, and work at them for weeks if he liked. And, indeed, we see in all that he has achieved, constantly the same power of production; and in all his plays we never come to a passage of which it could be said ‘this was not written in the proper humour, or with the most perfect faculty.’ Whilst we read him, we receive the impression of a man thoroughly strong and healthy, both in mind and body.

“Supposing, however, that the bodily constitution of a dramatic poet were not so strong and excellent, and that he were, on the contrary, subject to frequent illness and weakness, the productiveness necessary for the daily construction of his scenes would very frequently cease, and would often fail him for whole days. If now, by some spirituous drink, he tried to force his failing productiveness, and supply its deficiencies, the method would certainly answer, but it would be discoverable in all the scenes which he had written under such an influence, to their great disadvantage. My counsel is, therefore, to force nothing, and rather to trifle and sleep away all unproductive days and hours, than on such days to compose something which will afterwards give one no pleasure.”

“You express,” returned I, “what I myself have very often experienced and felt, and what one must respect as thoroughly true and just. But still it appears to me that a person might, by natural means, heighten his productive mood, without exactly forcing

it. It has often been the case in my life to be unable to arrive at any right conclusion in certain complicated circumstances. But if, in such a case, I have drunk a few glasses of wine, I have at once seen clearly what was to be done, and have come to a resolution on the spot. The adoption of a resolution is, after all, a species of productiveness, and if a glass or two of wine will bring about this good effect, such means are surely not to be rejected altogether.”

“I will not contradict your remark,” returned Goethe; “but what I said before is also correct, by which you see that truth may be compared to a diamond, the rays of which dart not to one side, but to many. Since you know my ‘Divan’ so well, you know also that I myself have said—

When we have drunk  
We know what's right;

and therefore that I perfectly agree with you. Productive-making powers of a very important kind certainly are contained in wine; but still, all depends upon time and circumstances, and what is useful to one is prejudicial to another. Productive-making powers are also contained in sleep and repose; but they are also contained in movement. Such powers lie in the water, and particularly in the atmosphere. The fresh air of the open country is the proper place to which we belong; it is as if the breath of God were there wafted immediately to men, and a divine power exerted its influence. Lord Byron, who daily passed several hours in the open air, now riding on horseback along the sea-shore, now sailing or rowing in a boat, now bathing in the sea, and exercising his physical powers in swimming, was one of the most productive men who ever lived.”

Goethe had seated himself opposite to me, and we spoke about all sorts of subjects. Then we again dwelt upon Lord Byron, and touched upon the many misfortunes which had embittered his later life, until at last a noble will, but an unhappy destiny, drove him into Greece, and entirely destroyed him.

“You will generally find,” continued Goethe, “that in his middle age a man frequently experiences a change; and that, while in his youth everything has favoured him, and has prospered with him, all is now completely reversed, and misfortunes and disasters are heaped one upon another.

“But do you know my opinion on this matter? Man must be ruined again! Every extraordinary man has a certain mission which he is called upon to accomplish. If he has fulfilled it, he is no longer needed upon earth in the same form, and Providence uses him for something else. But as everything here below happens in a natural way, the demons keep tripping him up till he falls at last. Thus it was with Napoleon and many



others. Mozart died in his six-and-thirtieth year. Raphael at the same age. Byron only a little older. But all these had perfectly fulfilled their missions, and it was time for them to depart, that other people might still have something to do in a world made to last a long while.”

It was now late; Goethe gave me his dear hand, and I departed.

[1] If for this Aristotelian word the reader substitutes the popular expression “soul,” he will not go far wrong as far as this passage is concerned.—*Trans.*

(Sup.) *Wed., March 12.*

After I had quitted Goethe yesterday evening, the important conversation I had carried on with him remained constantly in my mind. The discourse had also been upon the sea and sea air; and Goethe had expressed the opinion, that he considered all islanders and inhabitants of the sea-shore in temperate climates far more productive, and possessed of more active force, than the people in the interior of large continents.

Whether or not it was that I had fallen asleep with these thoughts, and with a certain longing for the inspiring powers of the sea; suffice it to say, I had in the night the following pleasant, and to me very remarkable, dream:—

I saw myself in an unknown region, amongst strange men, thoroughly cheerful and happy. The most beautiful summer day surrounded me in a charming scene, such as might be witnessed somewhere on the shores of the Mediterranean, in the south of Spain or France, or in the neighbourhood of Genoa. We had been drinking at noon round a merry table, and I went with some others, rather young people, to make another party for the afternoon.

We had loitered along through bushy and pleasant low lands, when we suddenly found ourselves in the sea, upon the smallest of islands, on a jutting rock, where there was scarcely room for five or six men, and where one could not stir for fear of slipping into the water. Behind us, whence we had come, there was nothing to be seen but sea; but before us lay the shore at about a quarter of an hour's distance, spread out most invitingly. The shore was in some places flat, in others rocky and somewhat elevated; and one might observe, between green leaves and white tents, a crowd of joyous men in light-coloured clothes, recreating themselves with music, which sounded from the tents. “There is nothing else to be done,” said one of us to the other, “we must undress and swim over.” “It is all very well to say so,” said I, “you are young, handsome fellows, and

good swimmers; but I swim badly, and I do not possess a shape fine enough to appear, with pleasure and comfort, before the strange people on shore.” “You are a fool,” said one of the handsomest, “undress yourself, give me your form, and you shall have mine.” At these words I undressed myself quickly, and was soon in the water, and immediately found myself in the body of the other as a powerful swimmer. I soon reached the shore, and, naked and dripping, stepped with the most easy confidence amongst the men. I was happy in the sensation of these fine limbs; my deportment was unconstrained, and I at once became intimate with the strangers, at a table before an arbour, where there was a great deal of mirth. My comrades had now reached land one by one, and had joined us, and the only one missing was the youth with my form, in whose limbs I found myself so comfortable. At last he also approached the shore, and I was asked if I was not glad to see my former self? At these words I experienced a certain discomfort, partly because I did not expect any great joy from myself, and partly because I feared that my young friend would ask for his own body back again. However, I turned to the water, and saw my second self swimming close up to me, and laughing at me with his head turned a little on one side. “There is no swimming with those limbs of yours,” exclaimed he, “I have had a fine struggle against waves and breakers, and it is not to be wondered at that I have come so late, and am last of all.” I at once recognized the countenance; it was my own, but grown young, and rather fuller and broader, with the freshest complexion. He now came to land, and whilst he raised himself, and first stepped along the sand, I had a view of his back and legs, and was delighted with the perfection of the form. He came up the rocky shore to us, and as he came up to me he had completely my new stature. “How is it,” thought I to myself, “that your little body has grown so handsome. Have the primeval powers of the sea operated so wonderfully upon it, or is it because the youthful spirit of my friend has penetrated the limbs?” Whilst we enjoyed ourselves together for some time, I silently wondered that my friend did not show any inclination to resume his own body. “Truly,” thought I, “he looks bravely, and it may be a matter of indifference to him in which body he is placed, but it is not the same thing to me; for I am not sure whether in that body I may not shrink and become as diminutive as before.” In order to satisfy myself on this point, I took my friend aside, and asked him how he felt in my limbs? “Perfectly well,” said he; “I have the same sensation of my own natural power as before; I do not know what you have to complain of in your limbs. They are quite right with me; and you see one only has to make the best of oneself. Remain in my body as long as you please; for I am perfectly contented to remain in yours through all futurity.” I was much pleased by this explanation, and as in all my sensations, thoughts, and recollections, I felt quite as usual, my dream gave me the impression of a perfect

independence of the soul, and the possibility of a future existence in another body.

“That is a very pretty dream,” said Goethe, when, after dinner to-day, I imparted to him the principal features. “We see,” continued he, “that the muses visit you even in sleep, and, indeed, with particular favour; for you must confess that it would be difficult for you to invent anything so peculiar and pretty in your waking moments.”

“I can scarcely conceive how it happened to me,” returned I; “for I had felt so dejected all day, that the contemplation of so fresh a life was far from my mind.”

“Human nature possesses wonderful powers,” returned Goethe, “and has something good in readiness for us when we least hope for it. There have been times in my life when I have fallen asleep in tears; but in my dreams the most charming forms have come to console and to cheer me, and I have risen the next morning fresh and joyful.

“There is something more or less wrong among us old Europeans; our relations are far too artificial and complicated, our nutriment and mode of life are without their proper nature, and our social intercourse is without proper love and good will. Every one is polished and courteous; but no one has the courage to be hearty and true, so that an honest man, with natural views and feelings, stands in a very bad position. Often one cannot help wishing that one had been born upon one of the South Sea Islands, a so-called savage, so as to have thoroughly enjoyed human existence in all its purity, without any adulteration.

“If in a depressed mood one reflects deeply upon the wretchedness of our age, it often occurs to one that the world is gradually approaching the last day. And the evil accumulates from generation to generation! For it is not enough that we have to suffer for the sins of our fathers, but we hand down to posterity these inherited vices increased by our own.”

“Similar thoughts often occur to me,” answered I; “but if, at such a time, I see a regiment of German dragoons ride by me, and observe the beauty and power of these young people, I again derive some consolation, and say to myself, that the durability of mankind is after all not in such a desperate plight.”

“Our country people,” returned Goethe, “have certainly kept up their strength, and will, I hope, long be able not only to furnish us with good horsemen, but also to secure us from total decay and destruction. The rural population may be regarded as a magazine, from which the forces of declining mankind are always recruited and refreshed. But just go into our great towns, and you will feel quite differently. Just take a turn by the side of a second *diable boiteux*, or a physician with a large practice, and he will whisper to you tales which will horrify you at the misery, and astonish you at the vice with which human nature is visited, and from which society suffers.

“But let us banish these hypochondriacal thoughts. How are you going on? What are you doing? What else have you seen to-day? Tell me, and inspire me with good thoughts.”

“I have been reading Sterne,” returned I, “where Yorick is sauntering about the streets of Paris, and makes the remark that every tenth man is a dwarf. I thought of that when you mentioned the vices of great towns. I also remember to have seen, in Napoleon's time, among the French infantry, one battalion which consisted entirely of Parisians, who were all such puny, diminutive people, that one could not comprehend what could be done with them in battle.”

“The Scotch Highlanders under the Duke of Wellington,” rejoined Goethe, “were doubtless heroes of another description.”

“I saw them in Brussels a year before the battle of Waterloo,” returned I. “They were, indeed, fine men; all strong, fresh, and active, as if just from the hand of their Maker. They all carried their heads so freely and gallantly, and stepped so lightly along with their strong bare legs, that it seemed as if there were no original sin, and no ancestral failing, as far as they were concerned.”

“There is something peculiar in this,” said Goethe. “Whether it lies in the race, in the soil, in the free political constitution, or in the healthy tone of education,—certainly the English in general appear to have certain advantages over many others. Here in Weimar, we see only a few of them, and, probably, by no means the best; but what fine, handsome people they are. And however young they come here, they feel themselves by no means strange or embarrassed in this foreign atmosphere; on the contrary, their deportment in society is as full of confidence, and as easy as if they were lords everywhere, and the whole world belonged to them. This it is which pleases our women, and by which they make such havoc in the hearts of our young ladies. As a German father of a family, who is concerned for the tranquillity of his household, I often feel a slight shudder, when my daughter-in-law announces to me the expected arrival of some fresh, young islander. I already see in my mind's eye, the tears which will one day flow when he takes his departure. They are dangerous young people; but this very quality of being dangerous is their virtue.”

“Still, I would not assert,” answered I, “that the young Englishmen in Weimar are more clever, more intelligent, better informed, or more excellent at heart than other people.”

“The secret does not lie in these things, my good friend,” returned Goethe, “Neither does it lie in birth and riches; it lies in the courage which they have to be that for which nature has made them. There is nothing vitiated or spoilt about them, there is nothing

halfway or crooked; but such as they are, they are thoroughly complete men. That they are also sometimes complete fools, I allow with all my heart; but that is still something, and has still always some weight in the scale of nature.

“The happiness of personal freedom, the consciousness of an English name, and of the importance attached to it by other nations, is an advantage even to the children; for in their own family, as well as in scholastic establishments, they are treated with far more respect, and enjoy a far freer development, than is the case with us Germans.

“In our own dear Weimar, I need only look out of the window to discover how matters stand with us. Lately, when the snow was lying upon the ground, and my neighbour's children were trying their little sledges in the street, the police was immediately at hand, and I saw the poor little things fly as quickly as they could. Now, when the spring sun tempts them from the houses, and they would like to play with their companions before the door, I see them always constrained, as if they were not safe, and feared the approach of some despot of the police. Not a boy may crack a whip, or sing or shout; the police is immediately at hand to forbid it. This has the effect with us all of taming youth prematurely, and of driving out all originality and all wildness, so that in the end nothing remains but the Philistine.

“You know that scarcely a day passes in which I am not visited by some travelling foreigner. But if I were to say that I took great pleasure, in the personal appearance, especially of young, learned Germans from a certain north-eastern quarter, I should tell a falsehood.

“Short-sighted, pale, narrow-chested, young without youth; that is a picture of most of them as they appear to me. And if I enter into a conversation with any of them, I immediately observe that the things in which one of us takes pleasure seem to them vain and trivial, that they are entirely absorbed in the Idea, and that only the highest problems of speculation are fitted to interest them. Of sound senses or delight in the sensual, there is no trace; all youthful feeling and all youthful pleasure are driven out of them, and that irrecoverably; for if a man is not young in his twentieth year, how can he be so in his fortieth?”

Goethe sighed and was silent.

I thought of the happy time in the last century, in which Goethe's youth fell; the summer air of Sesenheim passed before my soul, and I reminded him of the verses—

In the afternoon we sat,  
Young people, in the cool.

“Ah,” sighed Goethe, “those were, indeed, happy times. But we will drive them from

our minds, that the dark foggy days of the present may not become quite insupportable.”

“A second Redeemer,” said I, “would be required to remove from us the seriousness, the discomfort, and the monstrous oppressiveness of the present state of things.”

“If he came,” answered Goethe, “he would be crucified a second time. Still, we by no means need anything so great. If we could only alter the Germans after the model of the English, if we could only have less philosophy and more power of action, less theory and more practice, we might obtain a good share of redemption, without waiting for the personal majesty of a second Christ. Much may be done from below by the people by means of schools and domestic education; much from above by the rulers and those in immediate connection with them.

“Thus, for instance, I cannot approve the requisition, in the studies of future statesmen, of so much theoretically-learned knowledge, by which young people are ruined before their time, both in mind and body. When they enter into practical service, they possess, indeed, an immense stock of philosophical and learned matters; but in the narrow circle of their calling, this cannot be practically applied, and must therefore be forgotten as useless. On the other hand, what they most needed they have lost; they are deficient in the necessary mental and bodily energy, which is quite indispensable when one would enter properly into practical life.

“And then, are not love and benevolence also needed in the life of a statesman,—in the management of men? And how can any one feel and exercise benevolence towards another, when he is ill at ease with himself?

“But all these people are in a dreadfully bad case. The third part of the learned men and statesmen, shackled to the desk are ruined in body, and consigned to the demon of hypochondria. Here there should be action from above, that future generations may at least be preserved from a like destruction.

“In the mean time,” continued Goethe, smiling, “let us remain in a state of hopeful expectation as to the condition of us Germans a century hence, and whether we shall then have advanced so far as to be no longer *savants* and philosophers, but men.”

(Sup.\*) *Fri., May 16.*

I took a drive with Goethe. He amused himself with recollections of his disputes with Kotzebue and Co., and recited some very lively epigrams against the former, which were certainly more jocular than cutting. I asked him why he had not included them in his works.